with them we lost the valuable cargoes of grain and other essential imports they were carrying.

*Prospective shortage grows*

It became clear that we should have to reckon on a reduction, not of six million but of eight, ten or more millions of tons of imports. The committee promptly met this challenge by further proposals, which they submitted on 31st February, 1917, for still more drastic cuts in timber, paper, fruit, and vegetables, glass bottles, feeding-stuffs, iron-ore, sugar and other commodities. They suggested that sugar rationing might enable sugar imports to be reduced without serious hardship. The more important of these reductions were approved by the Cabinet.

*Quick results*

No time was lost in putting into force these various measures. A report of the Board of Trade, dated 10th May, 1917, on "Imports in Relation to Shipping," showed that by the month of April—^ second month after these restrictions were planned—the decrease in the imports of restricted goods, as compared with the volume of imports of these goods in April, 1916, was 499,000 tons for the month. Thus the initial aim of a planned reduction of 500,000 tons a month had in fact been achieved already.

The report said that, "*To meet the necessity of curtailment a policy was adopted which was originally intended to save about* 4,500,000 *tons in 1917, and there are prospects of its saving more than* 6,000,000."

Our actual imports in 1917 were 7.9 million tons

less than in 1916. In the course of the year, 6,000,000 tons of Allied and Neutral shipping were sunk by the enemy, most of it with cargoes. It is clear that only the careful organisation of our imports, which secured that upwards of 6,000,000 tons of the